

The Alliance Celebrates 100 Years of Ministry in Vietnam

The Evangelical Church of Vietnam (also known as Tin Lanh) just finished celebrating 100 years of ministry in the Communist country. Its first celebration of the achievement was held from June 14 through June 16 in Da Nang's large indoor stadium and drew a crowd of about 15,000 people with an overflow of 1,000—its largest-ever gathering.

The event was the first of four celebrations to mark 100 years since the Christian and Missionary Alliance began its outreach to Vietnam. The second celebration was held in Hanoi on June 20 with about 4,000 in attendance, the third was in Ho Chi Minh City on June 23 and 24, and the final celebration was held on July 2 at the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, Calif.

The Da Nang celebration featured a parade of hundreds from 20 tribal groups, all with membership in the ECVN, along with a 480-member tribal choir that sang "The Halleluiah Chorus." Thousands of believers raised their hands, responding positively to a call for total commitment to Christ, regardless of how difficult. Delegates were challenged to reach Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Europe or anywhere there are lost people.

Retired international worker Tom Stebbins preached an evangelistic message in Vietnamese on the prodigal son to a packed house. Nearly 1,000 responded to become followers of Jesus Christ.

"[The Vietnam believers] want to be a force for Jesus and the Kingdom advance to other nations. They are a sleeping giant in the cause of missions," U.S. Christian and Missionary Alliance President Gary Benedict said, who attended the celebration.

The Christian and Missionary Alliance is a worldwide family of Christians mobilized to fulfill the Great Commission by living out the fullness of Jesus Christ in personal experience and building His Church worldwide.

Today there are 1.2 million believers in Vietnam, most of them part of the Alliance. However, of the 71 people groups in Vietnam, 52 still have less than 2 percent who follow Jesus. About 40 million people in North Vietnam do not know Christ.